UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.157/PC/61/Add.9
2 March 1993

Original: ENGLISH

WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Preparatory Committee
Fourth session
Geneva, 19-30 April 1993
Item 5 of the provisional agenda

STATUS OF PREPARATION OF PUBLICATIONS, STUDIES AND DOCUMENTS FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE

Addendum

Contribution from the United Nations Population Fund

This report addresses UNFPA's work in the promotion of human rights in the area of population and development, particularly with respect to the human rights aspects of family planning.

GE. 93-11320

UNFPA AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since it became operational in 1969, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has worked with governments assisting them to formulate and implement population policies and programmes consonant with the principles laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The mandate of the Fund, as specified in ECOSOC Resolution 1763, encompasses, inter alia, promoting awareness, both in developed and developing countries, of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems, of the human rights aspects of family planning and assisting countries in delineating strategies to deal with these issues in accordance with their respective plans and priorities. In carrying out its mandate, UNFPA has adhered to the fundamental principles of universality, neutrality, and respect for the sovereignty of each country.

2. This report, prepared in connexion with the upcoming World Conference on Human Rights, will present an overview of the work of UNFPA in the context of the promotion of human rights, examine the human rights dimension of selected areas of the Fund's mandate -- family planning and the status of women -- and identify some of the key issues that need to be addressed in responding to the population and development challenges of the coming decades. The annex to this report contains excerpts from various international instruments which pertain to population and human rights.

II. UNFPA AND HUMAN RIGHTS

3. In pursuing its mandate to enable countries to respond to population and development concerns, UNFPA has been keenly aware of the universality and indivisibility of human rights. It has subscribed to the notion that all human rights are inextricably bound together and that the full enjoyment of any one human right is contingent on the realization of all the others. When the Fund launched its activities in 1969, there was at best a limited understanding of the interrelationship between population trends and the achievement of development goals and one of its first tasks was to create an awareness of these linkages. In creating this awareness, the Fund drew on the relevant articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in particular: the recognition of all individuals as persons before the law; the right to marry and to found a family; the right to work and receive equal pay for equal work; and, the right to education, social security and an adequate standard of living. Particularly important for the work of the Fund is Article 16 of the Proclamation of Teheran (1968), which underscored reproductive choice as a basic human right, stating "Parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their

children." This provision has been amplified in a number of international instruments since 1968.

4. The Fund has always defined "population" in the broadest sense, addressing not only the principal demographic variables -- fertility, mortality and migration -- but also emphasizing overarching concerns such as improving the status of women, addressing special needs of adolescents and responding to the interaction between population, resources, environment and development. In implementing its mandate, UNFPA has worked in an innovative and flexible manner. From the beginning, it entered into dialogue with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the academic community to seek out ideas for programming in this relatively new sector. Indeed, it was one of the first United Nations organizations to use NGOs in project execution. In working with Governments, the Fund has always adhered to the principle that every nation has the sovereign right to determine its own population policy.

5. The principal areas for UNFPA assistance include the following: data collection and analysis; policy development and population research; maternal and child health and family planning; information, education and communication; and, women, population and development. In each of these substantive areas, UNFPA provides support for training, research, technical backstopping and dissemination of information. In response to Governments' requests for assistance, UNFPA, initially through such modalities as "Needs Assessments", and now through "Programme Review and Strategy Development" exercises, works with countries to articulate appropriate policies and programmes designed to build country level capacity to respond to critical concerns related to population and sustainable development. In view of limited financial resources and in response to equity considerations, UNFPA established a priority system in order that the greatest share of its resources would be allocated to those countries having the most serious population problems and in greatest need of external assistance. To qualify, countries must have a per capita income below $750 and must meet two of the following criteria: annual population increment of 100,000 or more; a gross reproduction rate of 2 or more; infant mortality rate of 120 or higher; female literacy rate of 40 per cent or below; and, agricultural population density of 2 or more persons per hectare. At present there are 56 priority countries: 31 in sub-Saharan Africa, 16 in Asia and the Pacific, 6 in the Arab States and 3 in Latin America and the Caribbean.

6. As part of its advocacy and awareness creating efforts, UNFPA has encouraged countries to recognize that population is a programmable sector and that population concerns constitute an integral part of development planning. If development planning is to respond to the essential needs of people and to enable them to exercise the basic human right to development, it is necessary to have accurate and timely data as the basis for formulating responsive policies and programmes. Hence, UNFPA has extended extensive assistance to countries to strengthen their capacity for collecting, analyzing and utilizing population data. This effort to strengthen basic population data was particularly notable in Africa, where many countries had never had a modern census and thus, had

little or no information on the size, structure and growth trends of their populations. In co-operation with the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Africa, the Fund supported the African Census Programme, which covered 22 countries and lasted from 1970 to 1977.

7. UNFPA's support for censuses and surveys and for the establishment of population planning units has made it possible for developing countries to gain a better knowledge of their demographic situations. Such knowledge is an essential first step if countries are to devise policies geared to developing human resources and to extending the right to development to its people. UNFPA has always emphasized the importance of population policies and of including population in development planning. It has stressed that policies addressing population concerns, particularly issues related to growth and distribution, are essential for social and economic development and the realization of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The increasing number of requests from countries for assistance with policy formulation and population planning prompted UNFPA to initiate the Global Programme of Training in Population and Development. This programme is intended for mid career government officials wishing to increase their knowledge of population and development interrelationships and their skills in incorporating population concerns into development planning. While all UNFPA-assisted activities can be construed as ultimately promoting human rights, the two areas where this connexion is most explicit are: family planning and reproductive rights; and, women, population and development concerns. These will be examined in the following section.

III. THE HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECTS OF FAMILY PLANNING AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Family Planning

8. Reproductive freedom as a basic human right and the right of individuals and couples to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children has been affirmed in a number of international instruments. The principle was put forth in 1966 by the UN General Assembly in Resolution 21/2211 on Population Growth and Economic Development, which stated that, "The size of the family should be the free choice of each individual family." This resolution recalled General Assembly Resolution 1838 of 18 December 1962 on population growth and economic development, and ECOSOC Resolutions 933 C (1963), 1048 (1964) and 1084 (1965) on the intensification of demographic studies, research and training on population growth and economic and social development, and on work programmes and priorities in the field of population, as well as relevant resolutions passed by the governing bodies of WHO and UNESCO. In 1968, the Teheran Conference on Human Rights re-affirmed these principles, stating

that "The protection of the family and of the child remains the concern of the international community. Parents have a basic human right to determine freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children." (Proclamation of Teheran, Article 16.)

9. In subsequent years, these principles have been elaborated in several intergovernmental conferences and instruments. (See selected citations in Annex.) The World Population Plan of Action (WPPA) issued by the World Population Conference (Bucharest, 1974) expanded on the wording found in the Teheran Declaration by citing "individuals" and "couples". Paragraph 14f of the WPPA states, "All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information and means to do so; the responsibility of couples and individuals in the exercise of this right takes into account the needs of their living and future children, and their responsibilities toward the community."

10. The WPPA addressed the human rights dimension of population and development issues from the micro and macro perspective. It acknowledged Governments' responsibility to provide people with the means to make effective decisions on family size. It called attention to the need for Government interventions to improve health standards, education, employment opportunities and the status of women, underscoring that these factors have considerable effects on decisions on such questions as family size and on migration. In circumstances where these responsibilities are neglected or cannot be fulfilled, the result is damaging both to individual lives and to prospects for balanced development. The WPPA notes that, "Individual reproductive behavior and the needs and aspirations of society should be reconciled. In many developing countries, and particularly in the large countries of Asia, the desire of couples to achieve large families is believed to result in excessive national population growth rates and Governments are explicitly attempting to reduce those rates by implementing specific policy measures. On the other hand, some countries are attempting to increase desired family size, if only slightly." (Para. 7).

11. The right to reproductive choice is reiterated in the recommendations of the 1984 International Conference on Population (Mexico City), in the 1979 Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, in the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategy, which was agreed to at the Third World Conference on Women (Nairobi, 1985) and in the Amsterdam Declaration, which was issued by the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-First Century (Amsterdam, 1989).

12. UNFPA's mandate has placed it in a key position to enhance the possibility for people to exercise their right of reproductive choice. Over the past twenty-three years, UNFPA has worked with Governments, helping them to design family planning programmes that are financially feasible and appropriate to the cultural setting. In extending assistance, UNFPA supports all methods of family planning, including natural family planning, that are considered technically safe and effective by WHO and that are

in accordance with the policies of requesting countries. The Fund has encouraged Governments to ensure that sufficient and reliable information and counselling are available in order that family planning decisions can be made with free and informed consent. Indeed, over the years, UNFPA has devoted considerable resources to communications efforts designed to broaden knowledge regarding reproductive choice and contraceptive methods. In view of the high rates of adolescent fertility worldwide, the Fund has supported WHO in undertaking programme-related research and training activities addressing key issues in adolescent reproductive health, particularly the design of information and service programmes responsive to the needs of young women and men. Recognizing that adolescents are a particularly vulnerable group with respect to the right of reproductive choice, UNFPA, WHO and Unicef have issued a joint statement on The Reproductive Health of Adolescents (1989).

13. The experience of the Fund has underscored the importance of access to a broad range of safe and effective contraception and the availability of quality services. Thus, in extending technical assistance for family planning, the Fund has underscored to governments the need to offer a choice of contraceptive methods as well as the need to provide responsive, qualified and supportive services. UNFPA has expended approximately $46 million for basic contraceptive research and development, providing assistance to the WHO Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP) and the International Committee on Contraception Research. In supporting such efforts, the Fund has stressed the need to develop male contraceptives, thus underscoring that family planning decisions and contraception should be a shared responsibility. The Fund has also emphasized the importance of adapting and improving already existing methods, particularly barrier methods. Such methods are especially critical in view of the AIDS pandemic and as a means of inhibiting the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

14. The provision of "quality services" is an essential step if the human rights aspect of reproductive health and family planning is to be observed. The concept of "quality of care" is grounded in respect for the dignity of the individual and encompasses the following elements: a broad choice of contraceptive methods; provision of information to clients; technical competence of service providers; positive provider-client interaction; mechanism for client follow-up; and, an appropriate constellation of related health, medical and counselling services.

15. In order to improve the quality aspect of reproductive health care, UNFPA provides technical assistance to MCH/FP training programmes for various levels of health personnel. UNFPA support to the newly established regional training centre in Tunisia for Francophone countries has been used to strengthen its instructional programme and to develop management programmes. UNFPA provided similar assistance to the Regional Training Centre for Family Health in Mauritius. In sub-Saharan Africa, UNFPA has in recent years allocated nearly half of its assistance to MCH/FP activities in the region to training programmes. At the country level in Africa,

as part of the Fund's support to national MCH/FP programmes, rural health workers, traditional birth attendants and nurse/midwives received training in family planning techniques as well as in family planning communication.

Status of Women

16. UNFPA involvement in the area of women, population and development has been a hallmark of the organization since its inception. Cognizant of the empirical research indicating that improvements in women's status, particularly in education and health, had a beneficial impact on demographic variables, the Fund encouraged Governments to address this dimension in their population and development planning. In 1975, UNFPA issued guidelines for incorporating women's concerns into population and development activities, making it one of the first United Nations organizations to take such an initiative. These guidelines have been revised over the years to permit the Fund to respond to changing circumstances. In 1987, UNFPA's Governing Council approved a strategy for women, population and development. The objective was "the complete and total integration of women's concerns into all population activities and the increased participation of women in all projects supported by the Fund." In 1991, UNFPA's Governing Council recommended the continuation of the components of the strategy which places particular emphasis on WPD training and the strengthening of women's organizations at the local level.

17. Within the framework established by the Guidelines and Strategy, UNFPA has emphasized two basic approaches to incorporating women's concerns into its programme of work: women-specific projects; and, the integration of women into projects in all activities it supports -- this latter approach is often referred to as "mainstreaming". Women-specific projects concentrate on activities that have a direct bearing on improving the situation of women (such as education, training, skill development or economic activities) or activities aimed at increasing the awareness of policy-makers, the media and the public of the importance of women's issues. Ideally, women would staff and manage such project activities, and regional, national or local women's organizations would play a central role in these projects. Projects that are designed specifically to benefit women offer a realistic starting-point for developing more comprehensive programmes and projects. They have high rates of return in improving the situation of the family as a whole and the motivation of women to adopt family planning services. These projects offer many opportunities for women to acquire self-esteem, skills and stature in their communities. The "mainstreaming approach" is an acknowledgement that women, women's concerns and women's capabilities must have an impact on the design, implementation and evaluation of projects in all sectors, just as projects in all sectors must have an impact on women, women's concerns and women's capabilities.

18. In addition to responding to women's concerns in its programming, UNFPA takes an active advocacy role, calling attention to the disparity of opportunities between women and men at all stages of their lives and the need to redress this imbalance. The Fund maintains that if women are to realize their full potential in their productive and community roles, they must be guaranteed their reproductive rights and must be able to manage their reproductive role. This means that they must have access to reliable information, to quality family planning services, and to the health care services necessary for the prevention and treatment of debilitating infections. These are essential if women's reproductive rights are to be secured. The ability to decide freely and in an informed manner the number and spacing of one's children is the first step in enabling women to exercise other choices. When a woman realizes that she can make decisions regarding her reproductive function, this experience of autonomy spreads to other aspects of her life. It enables her to pursue diverse opportunities and empowers her to make pivotal decisions in her own life.

19. Family planning is an essential means of enhancing women's autonomy. In addition, family planning is an important health measure whose benefits have been extensively documented. Each year, 500,000 women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth. Ninety-nine per cent of these women live in developing countries, where the lifetime risk of maternal death is 50 to 100 times greater than in developed countries. Many of the women who do survive, suffer serious and often permanent impairment as the result of complications incurred during pregnancy and childbirth. Reproductive choice has been recognized by the international community to be a human right of critical importance to women, because the ability to carry out their multiple roles in the family, the work place and the community, hinges on good health care, nutrition and reproductive well-being. Access to contraceptive education and services combined with wider access to education and quality health care enables women to exercise both their right to reproductive choice and their right to health.

20. The central position of women in population policies and in development in general is underscored in General Assembly Resolution 45/216 of 21 December 1990. The Resolution underscores "the crucial importance of resource investments in health and education, especially for women, for the success of population programmes, and urges Governments of developing countries to strengthen, according to their economic and social capacities and conditions, their political and financial commitments to investments in the social sector, and also urges Governments of developed countries, as well as concerned international, regional and non-governmental organizations, to strengthen their financial and technical support, in the areas of health and education, to respond positively to requests for population assistance and to increase significantly the proportion of their assistance destined for population activities." (Para. 5b)

21. Because women's status affects and is affected by such demographic variables as fertility and maternal and infant mortality, reproductive choice is of vital importance to them. This special importance is affirmed in the 1979 Convention for the Elimination

of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the 1984 international Conference on Population held in Mexico City and the 1985 Nairobi World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women.

22. The 1979 Convention emphasizes the inalienable rights of women, on an equal basis with men, "to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to exercise these rights." (Article 16e)

23. The 1984 International Conference on Population elaborated on this right, stating, "The ability of women to control their own fertility forms an important basis for the enjoyment of other rights; likewise, the assurance of socio-economic opportunities on an equal basis with men and the provision of the necessary services and facilities enable women to take greater responsibility for their reproductive lives." (Para. 17). Recommendation 18f states that efforts to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality should "support family planning as a health measure in maternal and child health programmes as a way of reducing births that occur too early or too late in the mother's life, of increasing the interval between births and of diminishing higher birth orders, and by giving special consideration to the needs of those in the post-partum and/or breast-feeding period."

24. The Amsterdam Declaration of 1989 emphasizes the imperative need to: "Recognize that women are at the centre of the development process and that the improvement of their status and the extent to which they are free to make decisions affecting their lives and that of their families will be crucial in determining future population growth rates." (Para. 1.1)

25. Consonant with the emphasis in these international instruments, many UNFPA-supported projects seek to improve the situation of women through education, training, skill development and economic activities. The Fund supports a number of projects in all regions based on the Safe Motherhood Initiative, which focuses on the needs of women, particularly the girl child and young women, and on the provision of quality mother-child health and family planning services. One of the most acute needs in the area of women and development is for gender-specific data. The Fund works closely with the United Nations Statistical Office in disseminating data on women and development. UNFPA has also funded several efforts with the Statistical Office to ensure that in all national data-collection activities, information is collected on a gender-specific basis.

26. In several countries, the Fund has supported micro-enterprises for women. For example, in the Philippines, UNFPA has funded an innovative income-generating activity which seeks to improve the lot of disadvantaged women in small fishing communities in Capiz and Pangasinan by expanding their access to credit and social services. In China, UNFPA has extended assistance, utilizing the concept of revolving funds, to women's

groups in several of the poorest counties to enable them to pursue income producing activities.

IV. ISSUES FOR THE 1990S

27. World population as of mid-1992 stood at approximately 5.5 billion persons and it is estimated that it will reach 6 billion by 1998. Over the next decade, the annual increment will average about 97 million, the highest level ever. Almost all of this growth, 95 per cent, will take place in developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Approximately 83 per cent of the population growth during the next decade will occur in cities. This growth will result both from natural increase and from increasing flows of population from rural areas. At present there are 11 cities with more than 10 million inhabitants; seven of these are in developing countries. By the year 2000, there will be 21 cities with populations in excess of 10 million and 17 of these will be in developing countries.

28. If the present social, economic and demographic situation is indicative, there is likely to be considerable international movement of population. It is estimated that approximately 70 million people, mostly from developing countries, are working, legally or illegally, in countries other than their countries of origin. Each year over one million people permanently emigrate and close to that number seek asylum. The period from the mid 1970s to 1990 witnessed rapid growth in the number of refugees -- from 2.8 million in 1976 to 17.3 million in 1990.

29. These trends clearly indicate that population is one of the compelling issues for the coming decades. Population factors of themselves -- growth, distribution, structure and migration -- are cause for considerable concern; however, the gravity of these trends becomes even more serious when population is viewed in terms of their linkage with poverty, environmental stress, the development of human resources and the potential for all peoples to exercise their human rights.

30. As we consider critical issues in population and human rights policy for the coming years, certainly poverty reduction, preservation of the environment and improvement in the situation of women are priority areas for concern and action. Poverty reduction is one of the principal goals of all countries. A recent United Nations survey of the world social situation shows that while the per cent of people living poverty in developing countries fell from 52 per cent in 1970 to 44 per cent in 1985, the actual number living in absolute poverty increased from 944 million to 1.2 billion over the period. Poverty and population problems are closely linked. The highest rates of mortality, as well as population growth, are in poor countries and among poor people. If poverty reduction programmes are to be effective, they must address the issue of

population growth and provide improved access to quality family planning and health services and to education.

31. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) highlighted the interrelationship between population and the environment. UNCED underscored that high rates of population growth and imbalances in population distribution often result in environmental degradation that constrict access to the natural resources necessary to maintain a basic standard of living. Environmental stress and the reduction of available natural resources translates into deprivation, particularly for those groups already living at the margin. The intensified focus on the environment has brought to the fore a number of equity issues, particularly with respect to consumption patterns between North and South, that will have to be addressed in the coming years.

32. International migration patterns as well as refugee movements are critical issues that the world community will have to address. It is essential that the dignity and human rights of those involved in such movements be guaranteed and observed. A first step in leading to a more informed dialogue on these issues would be to gather information on the magnitude and demographic characteristics of such flows.

33. Although the equality between women and men is proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and reiterated in numerous other international and national instruments, much remains to be done in order to improve the situation of women. It is now widely acknowledged that sustainable development cannot be achieved without the full participation of both women and men in all aspects of productive and reproductive life. Thus, Governments should ensure that gender specific data are collected and analyzed so that development strategies and policies can be assessed in terms of their impact on women. Such an analysis would lead to policies, strategies and programmes that are more gender-balanced.

34. Women's right to choice with respect to major decisions in their lives must be respected and facilitated. In order for this to occur, their rights before the law must be recognized and enforced and their access to education, to the resources of the household, to quality health care, to employment and to credit must be greatly expanded. In view of high levels of maternal mortality in many countries and patterns of female morbidity, governments should give priority to the adoption of measures to promote the health and nutrition of women and young girls. A key intervention in this regard would be the implementation of the Safe Motherhood Initiative. Reproductive freedom is key to the advancement of women. They must have access to information and to a range of safe and affordable contraceptive methods.

35. The results of several recent health and fertility surveys indicate a high demand for family planning. At present there is an urgent need for the development of safe and improved contraceptives for fertility regulation and for effective pharmaceutical products for protection against sexually transmitted diseases. Given the range of methods now

available, emphasis should be given to the development of male methods. In the process of contraceptive research, development and introduction, it is essential that such processes are conducted with full respect for human rights. Contraceptive research and trials of new methods should be governed by accepted ethical principles and internationally recognized standards. In particular, new methods should be tested on a range of individuals in developed and developing countries who have full information and have freely agreed to participate in the testing.

36. The experience of UNFPA during the past twenty-three years has convincingly demonstrated the importance of addressing the moral and ethical dimensions of population and development issues. It has illustrated the need to focus on reproductive rights as basic human rights and on the need to implement development policies and programmes that are equitable and appropriate and that acknowledge the centrality of women as participants in the development process. Although considerable progress has been made, much remains to be done. The Fund is committed to working with Governments, the international donor community and non-governmental organizations to ensure that population policies and programmes are responsive to national and local circumstances and that the basic human right to development is promoted and extended to all.

Annex

EXCERPTS PERTAINING TO POPULATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS FROM VARIOUS INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION: 1838 (XVII). POPULATION GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF 18 DECEMBER 1962

The General Assembly,

Considering that rapid economic and social progress in the developing countries is dependent not least upon the ability of these countries to provide their peoples with education, a fair standard of living and the possibility for productive work,

Considering further that economic development and population growth are closely interrelated,

Recognizing that the health and welfare of the family are of paramount importance, not only for obvious humanitarian reasons, but also with regard to economic development and social progress, and that the health and welfare of the family require special attention in areas with a relatively high rate of population growth, ...

4. *Recommends* that the Economic and Social Council, in co-operation with the specialized agencies, the regional economic commissions and the Population Commission, and taking into account the results of the inquiry referred to in paragraph 3 (above), should intensify its studies and research on the interrelationships of population growth and economic and social development, with particular reference to the needs of the developing countries for investment in health and educational facilities within the framework of their general development programmes, ...

SELECTED ARTICLES FROM THE CONVENTION TO ELIMINATE ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, 1979

Article 12

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

Article 16

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women: ....

e. The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights.

SELECTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION, MEXICO 1984

Recommendations Addressing Women, Population and Development Issues

Recommendation 5

Governments are strongly urged to integrate women fully into all phases of the development process, including planning, policy and decision-making. Governments should pursue more aggressively action programmes aimed at improving and protecting the legal rights and status of women through efforts to identify and to remove institutional and cultural barriers to women's education, training, employment and access to health care. In addition, Governments should provide remedial measures, including mass education programmes, to assist women in attaining equality with men in the social, political and economic life of their countries. The promotion of community support and the collaboration, at the request of Governments, or non-governmental organizations, particularly women's organizations, in expediting these efforts should be given paramount importance.

Recommendation 6

Governments should ensure that women are free to participate in the labour force and are neither restricted from, nor forced to participate in, the labour force for reasons of demographic policy or cultural tradition. Further, the biological role and women in the reproductive process should in no way be used as a reason for limiting women's right to work. Governments should take the initiative in removing any existing barriers to the realization of that right and should create opportunities and conditions such that activities outside the home can be combined with child-rearing and household activities.

Recommendation 10

All Governments which have not already done so are strongly urged to sign and ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Recommendations Addressing Population Policies

Recommendation 33

Governments that have adopted to intend to adopt fertility policies are urged to set their own quantitative targets in this area. Countries implementing family planning programmes should establish programme targets at the operational level, respecting the basic right of couples

and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, taking into account the needs of their living and future children and their responsibilities, assumed freely and without coercion, towards the community.

General guidelines for formulating international migration policies.

The guidelines set out below give due consideration to the basic fact that international migration is of concern to both the receiving countries and the countries of origin, particularly when the migration of skilled persons is involved. They reflect the bearing that international migration may have on the process of establishing a New International Economic Order and recognize that the effective safeguarding of the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants, without discrimination on the basis of race, culture, religion or sex, is an essential prerequisite for the realization of their positive contributions to the host society.

Recommendation 45

International migration policies should respect the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of individuals as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other pertinent international instruments. In keeping with these documents, receiving countries should adopt measures to safeguard the basic human rights of all migrants in their territory and to ensure the respect of their cultural identity. Measures should also be taken to promote the mutual adaptation of both immigrant groups and the population of the receiving country.

Recommendations 52

All measures adopted or implemented by countries of departure and of arrival to reduce the illegal entry, stay or employment of undocumented migrants (including amnesties, other regularization schemes, border controls and deportations) should respect their basic human rights.

Recommendation 53

In formulating laws and regulations to limit undocumented migration, Governments of receiving countries are invited to consider the guidelines set forth in the ILO Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers, 1975 (No. 143), part I. To be effective, such laws and regulations should address the treatment not only of the undocumented migrants themselves but also of those persons inducing or facilitating undocumented migration.

Recommendation 54

States that have not already done so are invited to consider acceding to the international instruments concerning refugees, in particular to the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

Recommendation 55

Governments and international agencies are urged to find durable solutions to problems related to refugees and refugee movements and to work towards the elimination of the causes of these problems. Governments, international organization and non-governmental organizations are urged to continue to promote the protection of refugees and to provide support and assistance to first asylum countries in satisfying the basic needs of refugees. Efforts towards the creation of conditions in which voluntary repatriation may take place should be pursued and assistance should be provided in rehabilitating returnees. The basic freedoms and human rights of returnees and their families should be guaranteed and assistance should be provided in developing opportunities for a return to a normal and productive way of living. In situations where neither voluntary repatriation nor resettlement in third countries appears to be feasible, Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations are urged to provide support and assistance to the countries of first asylum in developing the capacity of the national economic and social infrastructure to sustain, and subject to the full approval of the host countries, to integrate refugees.

EXCERPT FROM THE REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL FORUM ON POPULATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY (AMSTERDAM, 1989)

In the Preamble to the Amsterdam Declaration, participants from 79 countries expressed their concerns regarding the pressing development needs and issues of the coming decades. They acknowledged that population, resources and the environment are inextricably linked and stressed their commitment to bringing about a sustainable relationship between human numbers, resources and development.

They recognized that women are at the center of the development process and that the improvement of their status and the extent to which they are free to make decisions affecting their lives and that of their families will be crucial in determining future population growth rates.

They further acknowledged that the principal aim of social, economic and cultural development, of which population policies and programmes are integral parts, is to improve the quality of people's lives. The following goals and targets were adopted by the Amsterdam Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century in November 1989. The attainment of population goals and objectives should rest on the following:

- Strengthening of political commitment.
- Development of national strategies and programmes.
- Acceleration and expansion of resource mobilization.
- Strengthening of the role and status of women.
- Strengthening of the quality, effectiveness and outreach of family planning and maternal and child health programmes and services in both the public and the private sectors.
- Heightening community awareness and participation at all levels in the formulation and implementation of programmes and projects based on priorities and needs expressed by the women and men involved.
- Intensification of international cooperation in the sphere of population activities, especially directed and adapted to the specific conditions, particularly socio-cultural conditions, of recipient countries.

At the very least, national population goals and objectives for the coming decade and beyond should include:

- A reduction in the average number of children born per woman commensurate with achieving, as a minimum, the medium variant population projections of the United Nations.
- A major reduction in the proportion of women and men who are not currently using reliable methods of family planning, but who want to postpone, delay or limit childbearing.
- A substantial reduction in very early marriage and in teenage pregnancy.
- An increase in contraceptive prevalence in developing countries so as to reach at least 56 per cent of women of reproductive age by the year 2000.
- A reduction of the 1980 rate of infant mortality to rates of at most 50 per 1,000 live births by the year 2000 in all countries and major sub-groups within countries.
- A reduction in maternal mortality from all causes, including illegal abortion, by at least 50 per cent by the year 2000, particularly in regions where this figure currently exceeds 100 per 100,000 births.
- An increase in the average life expectancy at birth to 62 years or more for men and women in high mortality countries by the end of the century.
- A better geographical distribution of the population within national territories in balance with the proper use of resources.